

two species must have had some appeal to the bird as it could have had its fill with many of the other species I had collected.

—R. P. McMILLAN, "Glendearg," Bejoording.

Inter-species Relations in Birds.—On May 21, 1950, Dr. D. L. Serventy and myself noticed two King Parrots (*Purpureicephalus spurius*) chasing a third parrot which proved to be a Smoker (*Polytelis anthopeplus*). The Smoker, though it appears to have been seen for the first time in the Murray district at least ten years ago, has not increased in numbers. Most years odd birds are shot in the orchards and small travelling flocks of about half a dozen birds are seen at times. Another recent arrival, the Elegant Parrot (*Neophema elegans*) has on the other hand been quite numerous some years. Did the above little episode of the King Parrots and the Smoker denote that the Smoker's status in the district was still that of a stranger?

This is an interesting question as every summer Ground Cuckoo-Shrikes (*Pteropodocys maxima*) visit the farm and are generally attacked on their arrival by Butcher-birds (*Cracticus torquatus*) and sometimes Magpies (*Gymnorhina dorsalis*). Why do Magpies and Butcher-birds attack owls and frogmouths? Is it because they are seldom seen and are treated as strangers, or is it because they resemble hawks? Is the Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*) attacked as a stranger or because other species of birds realise its evil designs on their nests?

Some of what appear at first sight to be attacks by one species of bird on another species are often play. Magpies often chase Pipits (*Anthus australis*) and other birds in what would appear to be brutal attacks, yet the next second the Magpie is tired of the game and the victim chases the attacker. Of course there are numerous records of Magpies killing other birds but I think in most cases, if not all, it is unpremeditated.

—ANGUS ROBINSON, Coolup.

Smoker-Magpie Relations at Lower Chittering.—In view of Mr. Robinson's note above it may be of interest to report an observation made by Mr. W. H. Loaring and myself at Lower Chittering on September 1, 1950. On a tree were perched four Smokers and two Magpies, the two species being apparently indifferent towards each other. Smokers were plentiful in the district and Mr. Eric Schmidt informed us that the species is now to be found throughout the year at Lower Chittering. It would appear, therefore, that the Magpie and other resident species no longer consider it a stranger and accept it as a regular component of the local bird community.

Mr. Robinson's views are of great interest. Such behaviour would constitute additional impediments to the colonisation of new areas by stray wandering birds (cf. the attacks on immigrant Indian Crows reported in the *W.A. Naturalist*, vol. 2, 1950, p. 81).

—D. L. SERVENTY, Nedlands.